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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
8 April 1971

Re

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CEYLON

(Situation as of 1300 EST)

1. Despite evidence of a worsening situation, the government of Ceylon claims to have inflicted heavy casualties on insurgents and to have gained the upper hand in the third day of fighting. The state radio claims 105 insurgents have been killed in the past two days.

25X1

3. Aircraft of the small Ceylonese air force have apparently dislodged the insurgents holding the key bridge at Alawwa, 50 miles from Colombo on the route to Kandy in central Ceylon, and are said to be attacking other rebel strongpoints. In an attempt to clear the main highway to Kandy, an armored column was dispatched, but fragmentary press reports are unclear about whether it overcame resistance.

4. Deployment of regular army forces to assist the hard-pressed police is taking place, but is proving difficult because of the failure

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[redacted]

of telecommunication facilities, lack of appropriate road transport, and the disruption of long-distance train service.

25X1

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[redacted] No looting has been reported, nor have the insurgents attacked civilians. Policemen and police installations in the rural and suburban areas have been the primary targets of the youthful insurgents. Support and sympathy in the countryside for the rebel movement continues to be reported.

6. Despite Prime Minister Bandaranaike's claim that the rebellion is the work of an organization of young leftist militants known as the "Che Guevarists," a pro-government trade union in an announcement over the state radio is now claiming that reactionary forces, seeking to obstruct the government's anti-capitalist program, were behind the insurgency.

25X1